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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2022 3:04 PM
To: JudTestimony
Subject: Testimony for Monday Hearing on Youth and Crime

March 13, 2022

To Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, distinguished members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary

My name is Karen Dworski, and I have been a psychiatric social worker/therapist for about 40 years. I am also a member of Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance.

I am writing **IN SUPPORT** of:

S.B. No. 387 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.

S.B. No. 392 AN ACT CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY JUVENILES.

I am writing **IN STRONG OPPOSITION** to the following bills:

S.B. No. 365 AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS

S.B. No. 388: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON'S DWELLING, PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.

H.B. No. 5418 AN ACT REVISING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUTES AND INSURANCE STATUTES CONCERNING THEFT OF A MOTOR VEHICLE

H.B. No. 5417 AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND SERVICES AND FIREARMS BACKGROUND CHECKS.

S.B. No. 386 AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY LAWS OF THIS STATE.

S.B. No. 16 AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME

There are several reasons that I am writing today in opposition to bills 365, 388, 5418, 5417, 386, and 16. Those bills present a picture of high rates of youth crime in Connecticut, and these are false claims which are not supported by research. These reforms would have an especially harsh effect on minority youth, Brown, Black and low income White youth. They are a knee jerk reaction to fears and would, if implemented, be a great disservice to our community and cause unnecessary incarceration.

I urge you to create legal and social policy that addresses the social causes of youth crime. Create more after school and other recreation programs, provide counseling support for youth at risk and support services for parents. Enable a fair wage for working parents and look at the impact that Hartford is exploring through a minimum income for low income parents. Address school inequities and support programs that keep youth in school and graduation with marketable skills. Look at the need for accessible drug and alcohol treatment programs for both parents and youth. These kinds of social programs and others will go a long way to prevent youth crime and create a healthier society. The answer is to support struggling families and youth, not to track more young people into the criminal justice system which seldom reforms and often solidifies criminal behavior.

I respectfully urge you to SUPPORT S.B. No. 392 and S.B. No. 387 with the recommendations submitted by the Connecticut Justice Alliance. I appreciate the opportunity to give written testimony on this issue and invite you to contact me if you have further questions.

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